Alaska District

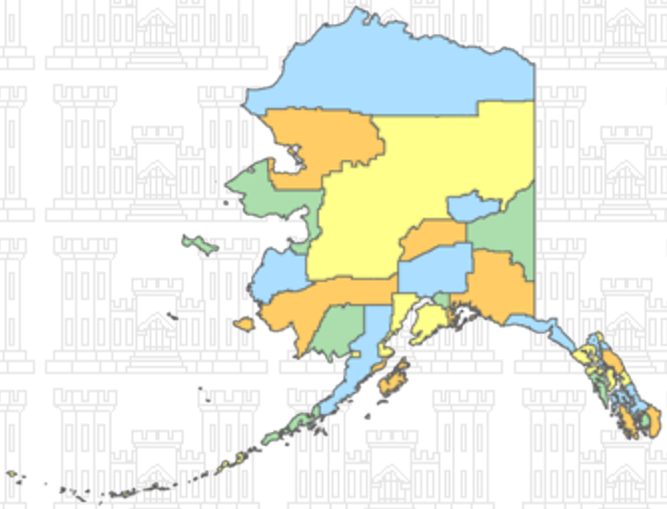
Lessons Learned on Scoping and Executing a FCSA for a Large Watershed Study

Presentation Outline

- Background Info
- Scoping Process
- FCSA Review & Approval
- Lessons Learned
- Where we are now
- What's Next?
- Wrap up

Background Information

- Where is the Matanuska-Susitna Watershe
- Uniqueness of Study Area
- Purpose of the Study & Needs of the Spon



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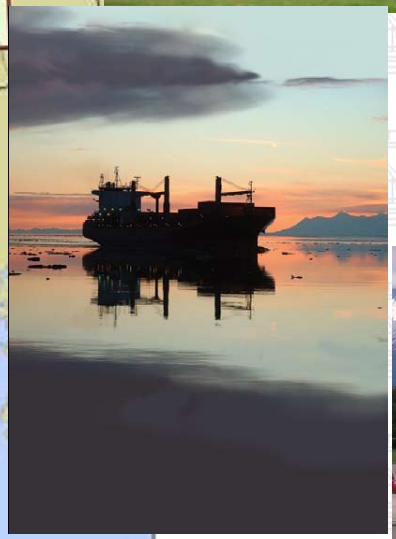
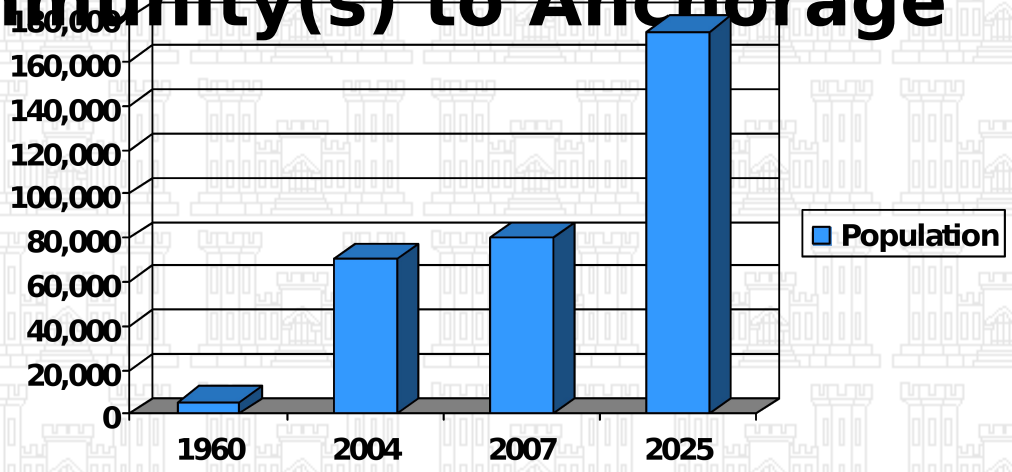


SUPPLY

Background Information

- Mat-Su Watershed
  - Size: 24,000 square miles (about size of state of W. VA)
  - Valley Settled by homesteaders 1930's
  - Fastest Growing Region in AK: 4%+ annual (ave)

community(s) to Anchorage



Welcome to the Mat-Su Valley

- Matanuska River
  - Headwaters in glacier fields of Chugach Mountains
  - 75 Miles in length
  - Glacial braided river system, very active erosion
  - Several homes & businesses lo
    banks

Welcome to the Mat-Su

- Susitna River Valley
  - Originates with Susitna Glacier on Mount Hayes
  - 300 Miles in length
  - Contributes 25% of Sockeye Salmon to Cook Inlet Fishery

Scoping Process

- **Important Point: NO Corps-constructed projects here**
- **Broken into Phases to make it n**
- **Large Collaboration Effort**
- **A great deal of mis-trust for Co**
- **Mat-Su Borough**
  - **small planning staff**
  - **“growing pains”**
  - **general lack of tolerance for zoning & regulation of private properties**

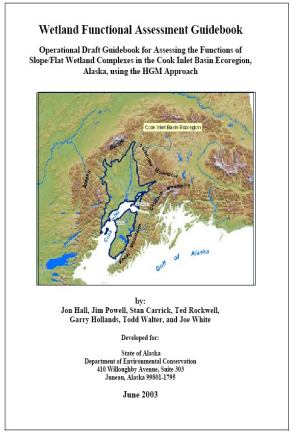
Scoping Process –

FCSA Review & Approval

- Draft Model FCSA to Sponsor: May 17, 2007
- Borough Administrator Approved Draft: June 4, 2007
  - Gave to their Legal for review/recommendation to sign
- New Model FCSA approved by HQUSACE: June 5, 2007
  - District received notification of new model June 13, 2007
  - District prepared new model FCSA/Corps legal review approved: June 22, 2007
- Sponsor Approved FCSA: July 23, 2007
  - Delay in approval due to question on new FCSA language related to Article XIII – Obligation of Future Appropriations
- FCSA Approval Pkg to POD: August 27, 2007
  - POD QC reviewer was temp detail w/no CW

Lessons Learned

- New Model FCSA is good but give yourself plenty of time
- Involve OC and Sponsor's Legal EARLY in FCSA process
  - legal offices talk directly to each other rather than through the Planner or PM
- Something unexpected is bound to happen
  - Communication is Key
- "Baby Steps" – make it manageabl
  - break it down to keep it from b overwhelming
  - Interim Products
  - Meet w/key stakeholders indivi
  - Know your "audience" and cust


Wetland Functional Assessment Guidebook

Operational Draft Guidebook for Assessing the Functions of Slope/Flat Wetland Complexes in the Cook Inlet Basin Ecoregion, Alaska, using the HGM Approach

by:
Jon Hall, Jim Powell, Stan Carrick, Ted Rockwell, Garry Hollands, Todd Walter, and Joe White

Developed for:

State of Alaska
Department of Environmental Conservation
410 Willoughby Avenue, Suite 303
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1795

June 2003

Lessons Learned - Cont

- **Bigger Picture:**
  - **Training for OC (both Dist and Div) & PM/Planning staff when new FCSA's are released**
  - **Need to remain flexible, open to new/different ideas and methodologies**
  - **Watershed are not ever going to be text book or ea ill be unique**

Where we are now

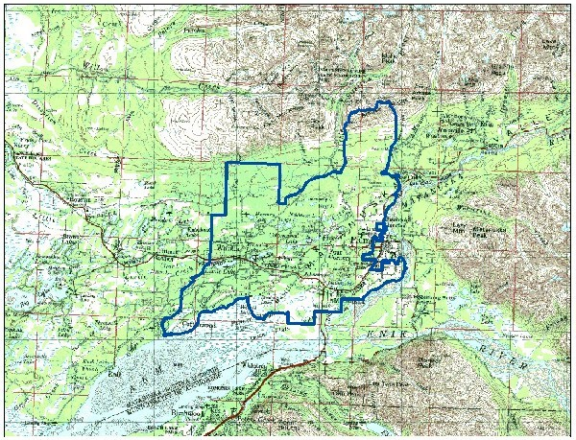
- **Phase I: Two concurrent tracts**
  - **1) Wetlands mapping & functional modeling**
  - **2) Data gap analysis**
- **Activities**
- **Wetland Mapping (300,000 acres this year)**
- **Develop New HGM-based functional assessment methodology**
- **Public Outreach**
- **Develop a Watershed Web**

Where we are now

- **Phase I: Activities– cont.**
  - **Stakeholder Collaboration**
    - **2-day Science Symposium w/Salmon Partnership**
  - **GIS database initial development**
  - **Data Organization**
  - **Watershed Resource Central Library (web-based)**
  - **Inventory of Existing Informati**
  - **Identify Additional Data Needs**

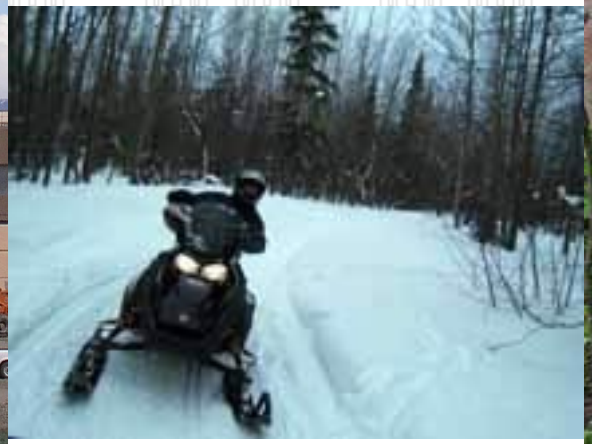
Where we are now

- **Phase I: Products (~18 months)**
  - **Wetlands maps- of selected areas for agency/public use**
  - **Wetland functional assessment methodology completed, tested and calibrated**
  - **Regional general permit process developed**
  - **Data Gap Analysis**
  - **Recommendations of future studies/projects**
  - **Centralized database and library**
  - **Watershed strategy plan**
  - **Website Launched**



What's Next?

- Recommendations for Future Studies
  - Sponsor Prioritization
- Development of Future Phase SOW
  - Negotiation of New FCSA or modify existing



Key Takeaway Points

- Communication is key
- Keep it manageable – break down scale, scope, costs, etc.
- Have some interim products
- Be flexible – don't expect "cookie cutter" results
- Involve all stakeholders – actively collaborate
- Not all products used will be Corps-derived
  - Need to accept work done by others
- Find a  etings

Questions?

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